

ībhāgvat-

śīta

treatise of self-help

verse in contemporary idiom  
with codification of interpolations



BS Murthy



Bhagvad-Gita: Treatise of Self-help  
Sans 110 interpolations in contemporary verse  
BS Murthy  
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**Dedicated to** grandparents,

Paternal: Bulusu Thimmaiah -Lakshmi Narasamma,  
Maternal: Challa Kameswara Rao - Suramma  
And parents: Peraiah Sastry and Kamakshi,  
In whose care my destiny so favourably placed me.

**Contents**

[Content 1: Introduction](#)  
[Content 2 : Awe Unfounded](#)  
[Content 3 : All about Interpolations](#)  
[Chapter 1: Arjuna's Dilemma](#)  
[Chapter 2: All about Life](#)  
[Chapter 3: Theory of Action](#)  
[Chapter 4: Practical Wisdom](#)  
[Chapter 5: Art of Renunciation](#)  
[Chapter 6: Practice of Restraint](#)  
[Chapter 7: Know the Spirit](#)  
[Chapter 8: Cycle of Creation](#)  
[Chapter 9: The Sacred Secret](#)  
[Chapter 10: Discern the Divine](#)  
[Chapter 11: Nature of Omnipresence](#)  
[Chapter 12: Doctrine of Faith](#)

- [Chapter 13](#): Field and Farmer
- [Chapter 14](#): Proclivities to Know
- [Chapter 15](#): Art of Liberation
- [Chapter 16](#): Frailty of Thought
- [Chapter 17](#): Science of Devotion
- [Chapter 18](#): Thy Looking-glass



### Introduction

The spiritual ethos and the philosophical outlook that the Bhagavad-Gita postulates paves the way for the liberation of man, who, as Rousseau said, '*being born free, is everywhere in chains*'. But equally it is a mirror of human psychology, which enables man to discern his debilities for appropriate redressal.

All the same, the boon of an oral tradition that kept it alive for over two millennia became its bane with the proliferation of interpolations therein. Besides muddying its pristine philosophy, these insertions affect the sequential conformity and structural economy of the grand discourse. What is worse, to the chagrin of the majority of the Hindus, some of these legitimize the inimical caste system while upholding the priestly perks and prejudices.

This rendition seeks to restore to the Gita, its original character by ridding it of hundred and ten interpolations, which tend to keep the skeptics away from it. And ironically these muddle the understanding of the adherents as well. In the theatre of man as nothing surpasses the drama of war, the stage for unveiling the Gita's unrivalled philosophy was set on the battleground of Kurukshetra at the threshold of the battle of Mahabharata.

### Awe Unfounded

The Bhagavad-Gita, popularly known as Gita, with its twin tracks of spiritual ethos and philosophical outlook, helps man commute to the destination of human excellence on the broad gauge of life. The unsurpassed art of living that the Gita expostulates, paves the way for the 'liberation of man' and that's what makes the Gita, which probably is around for over two millennia now, the treatise of self-help.

Nonetheless, all along, its spiritual track has come to acquire primacy what with its protagonists being the religiously inclined men and women for most part. Even

Mahatma Gandhi, the most famous and ardent advocate of Gita of our times, was eloquent about the spiritual solace that it afforded him. Needless to say, the innumerable commentaries on the Gita that appear in print or get voiced in discourses invariably come from people with religio-spiritual orientation. Insensibly, all these led to the public perception of the Gita as a spiritual tome, and that has brought about a situation where everyone swears by it but few venture to approach it.

That is due to, either the general lack of spiritual inclination in man, or his palpable apprehension that, anyway, it might be beyond one's comprehension. And those who attempt to read any of the commentaries give up soon enough – bowled either by the spiritual spin in theological jargon or tired of those lengthy commentaries. Oh, don't these texts tend to exhibit the commentator's own scholarship in Vedanta! In the bargain, hardly any reach the end, which would have helped them understand themselves better. What an irony in that having been bogged down in the semantics, one fails to grasp Krishna's message that's tailor made for him! And it is all about realization made difficult.

The public or private discourses on the Gita relatively fare better for they enthrall the audience by the eloquence of the speaker besides the interest the interspersed anecdotes elicit. However, amidst all this verbiage, the profundity of Krishna's message would seldom register in the minds of those who try to seek it. Of course, the commentary-discourse route misses on the essential ingredient of understanding - contemplation. After all, Krishna himself recommends to Arjuna at the end of his talk, s63, ch.18,

*'That thee heard of this wisdom  
For task on hand now apply mind'.*

If only Sanskrit, the *deva bhāṣha*, the language of the gods for the Hindus, and for the 18th Century British intellectual Sir William Jones, '*is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either*' were in currency now, it would have been a different proposition. Thus, the average person needing no interpretative crutches might have read the Gita in its pristine beauty, speculating about the profound wisdom lying in the sophisticated philosophy it postulates. That would have afforded one to view human nature, including his or her own, in that contemplative mirror enameled by the Gita. But that might be if and when Sanskrit, by the will of the gods, becomes a language of the masses in times to come.

But for the present, English, which many proud British linguists humbly held as the second best language in the world, is the right medium for contemplating the Gita even in the native land of Sanskrit. Of course, in verse sans commentary, and this is an attempt with that objective, needless to say, with divine inspiration.

What is the Gita all about that made many western intellectuals, though alien to the Hindu philosophy sing its praises? It is owing to its emphasis on human emancipation as opposed to the religious conditioning of man. Thus, its universal appeal jells with the hearts and minds of people, irrespective of their religious beliefs and cultural sensitivities. Simply put, the philosophy the Gita portrays is meant to help one imbibe the right attitude to lead life, but not to buttress his religious dogma of God. How this was achieved is the wonder that is Gita, cast in the Hindu mould but shaped into the secular form! After all, it might have been in the realms of human genius aided by some divine metallurgy.

The stage chosen for unfolding the grand philosophy is in itself reflective of the brilliance of the Gita. Nothing ever surpasses the drama of war in the realms of life and

so is the case with the accompanying debate about its rights and wrongs. At the threshold of the epic battle of Mahabharata, on the sacred grounds of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, the Pāndava Prince, suffers from qualms at the prospect of killing kith and kin in the Kaurava camp besides all those whom he adores therein. It has always been in the nature of man to worry about the prospect of his death besides that of his near and dear. Thus Lord Krishna, a friend of the Pandavās who happened to be Arjuna's charioteer, opens this classic discourse in s11, ch.2 by chiding his disciple and setting its trend as well,

*'Averring as knowing  
Worried over trivia!  
Reckon never wise  
Dead and alive both'.*

What follows in the best part of the remaining 643 verses spread over 17 chapters can be summarized thus:

The Supreme Spirit through Nature causes the birth of all beings. Thus, the indwelling spirit in the beings is a divisible part of the same Indivisible Supreme Spirit. The spirit lying within beings is subject in degrees to virtue, passion and delusion, the three attributes of Nature. It should remain the human endeavor to free the indwelling spirit from these nature-induced influences. This, however, is not possible for any in a single birth, and indeed, it would take the sustained effort of lot many births for that.

Thus, in the end, the soul could be tended towards that state of purity, which matches with that of the Supreme Spirit. As and when this happens, the indwelling spirit merges with the Supreme Spirit which is nothing but moksha. Understandably, from that state of unison with the Supreme, man never returns to be born again. This is about the spiritual goal of man in this world. In short, it's in the nature of the Supreme Spirit to separate the wheat from the chaff by bringing beings for dalliance in the domain of the Nature. While a pass ensures merger with the Supreme Spirit, failure keeps man ever in limbo. It is thus left for man to reach the Supreme, and the Gita shows him the way.

In the Gita lie the tools that tend one's spirit to that pristine purity, and that makes it the kitbag of moksha. Were it to postulate reaching that state through devotion alone, it would have been no more than a Hindu religious scripture, though of immense quality. In this, it is to be appreciated; the one thing that is common with the Oriental as well as the Semitic religions is the stress upon good human conduct. Nevertheless, the commonality seems to fork at some length, what with the Semitic religious precepts having their own caveat conditional. Well, Hinduism and its derivatives, Buddhism, Jainism etc., advocate virtue per se as the ideal human condition. But at the other end of the religious tunnel, Judaism, and its siblings, Christianity and Islam, obliging the faithful to uphold their dogmas, provide a religious code to human virtue.

It is thus, the Gita, without any religious dogma, deals with all aspects of human nature, and what is more, proposes corrective approaches for a peaceful, purposeful, and realized life. And this makes it the Treatise of Self- help for one and all, irrespective of his or her religious orientation and social background. Figure it out for yourself as Arjuna could do.

Now back to where it all began - the misleading image of the Gita as something that cannot be comprehended, even by the spiritually oriented, leave alone the mundane minded, without the guidance from a guru, well versed in the nuances of theology. Nothing could be farther from truth considering what Arjuna averred after having heard Krishna, (s73, ch.18),

*'Glad O Lord  
Gone are doubts,  
Sense I gained  
With Thy words.'*

And consider this. Arjuna was an educated prince and an exemplary warrior but with no specialized knowledge or training in theology.

Yet he found no difficulty in grasping the centrality of Krishna's advice that helped dispel his doubts. After all, it could be expected that Krishna who knew his friend's limitations on that count would have fashioned his discourse suitably. And won't that bring the Gita into the orbit of average human understanding? More so, Krishna's discourse was intended to be a ready reckoner for Arjuna and not an assignment in spirituality to be attended to as homework, with reference books and all, leaving the battlefield for the day.

But then why all this spin of spiritual intricacy on such a straightforward man-to-man talk! We must appreciate that the philosophy of the Gita is the apogee of the Hindu thought process that evolved through the Vedas, the Brahmasutrās and finally the Upanishads. In a way, the Gita is the Seal of the Hindu Wisdom, for it separates the ritualistic chaff from the spiritual grain in the granary of *sanātana dharma*. For those well versed in these and other such works, it is a tempting proposition to delve into the conceptual origins of a given *slōka* of the Gita in those ancient classics. But to what avail all that, and what is sought to be proved after all! That the Gita was a plagiarized work of Vyāsa?

Well, didn't Vyāsa place the Gita in proper perspective with 'the end of the chapter averment that it is the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutrās'. Yet this futile exercise of backward integration of the Gita with the Upanishads and others continues, giving raise to myriad interpretations to what is essentially a simple and straightforward message that Krishna intended for average human comprehension. In modern parlance, Bhagavad-Gita is like the Board Note, and it does not behove the board members to pore over the relevant files.

Though some well-meaning men and women have all along tried to straightjacket the Gita as a 'Book of Work', still it is the scriptural tag that sticks to it. Admittedly, this is not only detrimental to the Great Gita but also the misfortune of the common man who would have otherwise ventured to read it, and benefited as well. Thus, this work should be viewed as the outcome of an urge to place the Gita in its proper perspective for the utmost common good. On the degree of its success could depend how it would have served the cause of the Lord and that of man for whose benefit the Gita, the Treatise of Self-help, was fashioned, though not as scripture. It pays to recall the words of Krishna,

*'That thee heard of this wisdom  
For task on hand now apply mind'.*

Now it is left for all to deliberate and decide whether the Gita *per se* was Krishna's unrivalled divine revelation, or Vyāsa's philosophical discourse nonpareil. It is noteworthy that each of the eighteen chapters of the Gita has this post script - this chapter, with so and so designation, has the bearing of the Upanishads, possesses the knowledge of the Brahmasutrās and deals with the science of its application. And the Upanishads, as we all know, were but the works of man, though of divine proportion.

Thus, if we were to concede that the Gita was a divine disclosure, then that would suggest that Krishna borrowed from the Upanishadic philosophy to fashion his discourse! Won't that mean Lord Vishnu in His *avatar* as Krishna, relied on the works of

man to formulate moksha for him! That is an absurd proposition, at any rate that is, isn't it? Well, it's a matter for man to deliberate and decide.

Last but not the least is the sectarian twist some interpolations give to the Gita to the hurt of the majority of the Hindus. Understandably, the offended sections view this secular text with suspicion, and thus keep away from it altogether, missing so much as a consequence of the same. In 'All About Interpolations' that follows, this aberration is sought to be corrected, and it is hoped that for the general good of the Hindus this aspect of the Gita would be set right for all times to come.

### All about Interpolations

It was long suspected there could be interpolations in the Gita as it was being received down the ages through oral tradition. One way to scent the nature of these, if not zero in on every one of them, is to subject the text to the twin tests of sequential conformity and structural economy. Sequential conformity is all about uniformity of purpose sans digression and structural economy but represents the absence of repetitiveness. If the body Bhagavad-Gita of 700 *slokas* were to be scanned for possible fault lines on the above lines, the result would be but positive.

It must be realized that Bhagavad-Gita is the quintessence of the Brahmasutrās and the Upanishads, themselves the offshoots of the Vedic spiritual roots. Those esoteric portions that relate to spiritual knowledge apart, the Vedas contain ritualistic nuances of religious ceremonies. It is the latter that has been the source of the temporal power, which the priestly class of Brahmins came to exert on the Hindu religious mind. And these very people happened to be the principal protagonists of the Gita.

It is pertinent to note that while postulating *nishkāma karma*, the theory of disinterested action, Krishna is critical of the ritualistic aspects of and expectations from the Vedas (s42 - 45 and s53 of ch.2.). Indeed, the guiding philosophy of the Gita is all about action, pure and simple, to tend one on the path of duty without attachment. Were the message to be allowed to percolate down, wouldn't it have hurt the Brahmins, the gods' own angels on earth as the Nārāyana Upanishad proclaims, where it hurts most? Herein lies the provocation for them to dilute the philosophy, and the opportunity was theirs, being the repositories of the very message. Won't the priestly perks associated with the rituals of death do, to cite an example?

If upon its death, as Krishna avers, the soul were to transmigrate into another body, what for are the elaborate rituals for the dead! It is against this background that we might appreciate those interpolations that tend to advocate the ritualism on one hand, and the Brahman preeminence on the other. However, the non-application of mind on part of the Hindus who vouchsafe for these aspects of the Gita is indeed saddening.

Nevertheless, such interpolative *slokas* that are at variance with the avowed purpose of the Gita would show themselves up for ready pickings. In a seemingly about turn from s42- s45 and s53 of ch.2, s9-s16 of ch.3 formulate the procedural aspects of the rituals and the divine backing they enjoy. These, and such other aberrations highlighted in the prefaces of the chapters in this work were clearly the handiwork of the priestly interests to obfuscate the impact of the anti-ritualistic thrust of the Gita.

On one hand, these interpolations were meant to impart legitimacy to their creed by advocating the same through the revered text. And on the other, these were meant to stall the threat the Gita might pose to their calling in the long run. Likewise, the sprinkling of *slokas* that seek to confirm the prominence of the priestly class or affirm their prejudices cannot be anything but interpolations. To cap it all, are the s23-s27 of ch.8 which literally mean that if a person dies when the moon is on ascent he would

attain moksha, other way round were it in descent, and such like. These *slokas* espousing superstition, simply put are out of tune.

Nevertheless, when interpreted figuratively they jell with the overall message of the Gita as if to prove that the discourse of reason cannot be polluted even by superstitious insertions. Be that as it may, there is an uncanny element in these artful interpolations in that they were inserted in the narrative in such a manner that if read casually they effectively merge with the text. More so for the religiously conditioned Hindu whose upbringing conforms to the ritualistic regimen!

Next is the aspect of structural economy. One finds similitude of a given content in many a *sloka* in the same or in a different context throughout the text. Obviously, some of them are interpolations but which were the originals and which are the imitations, may be impossible to find out for they smugly fit into the overall structure. Be that as it may, save lengthening the discourse, they do not belittle the same and fortunately not even tire the reader, thanks to the exemplary charm of Sanskrit as a language. In this context, it is relevant to note that Krishna indicated in s19, ch.10 that he would reveal a few of His Glories, but what we have is a twenty-two *sloka* block of the same, s 20-42, in the same chapter and another twenty, s15-s31 in the next. One can be certain that many of the *slokas* in them contain interpolative padding. Nevertheless, these *slokas* make an exciting reading notwithstanding the faux pas in s36 ch.10 where fraud in gambling is described as the Glory of the Supreme. However, s12 -s15 of ch 15 in similar vein are interpolations being digressions.

If after deliberating, one decides that the Gita is more a work of Vyāsā's genius than any divine revelation by Lord Krishna, then he or she might come to the conclusion that the concluding s78 of the last chapter meant to impart divinity to the discourse is an interpolation.

However, no exercise of this kind would be complete unless the four pairs of *slokas* that have the same first lines are scrutinized. With the common first line, *sreyān sva-dharmo vigunah*, s35, ch.3 and s47, ch.18, seek to perpetuate caste oriented duties by discouraging any switch over, and thus are clear interpolations. S15 and s 28 of ch.6 both open with *yunjann evam sadātmānam* and the message too remains more or less the same though contextually different. Yet it appears that the former could be an interpolation. S34, ch.9 and s65, ch.18 not only start with *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto* but also mean same thing. In the ninth chapter as discussed in the introduction therein, s32 and s33 are clear interpolations. It also need be noted that s31 has the chapter closing character about it. Now follows this repetitive chapter-concluding *sloka* after two interpolations, s32 and s33. Logically speaking s34 is but an interpolation to help a proper chapter closure by slightly altering s65, ch.18. S7, ch.16 and s30, ch.18 both start with *pravruttim cha nivruttim cha* line but are contextually different and thus remain above suspicion.

Identified here in this third edition are 110 *slokas* of deviant nature in the entire text that could be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. However, so as not to besmirch the general tenor of the discourse in this Treatise of Self-help, the same are interpreted in a broader perspective, but not in their narrow sense intended by the interpolators. Be that as it may, there naturally arises a hypothetical question - What if the priestly interests of yore had seen to it that the said philosophy defining *slokas* of the second chapter that are inimical to their creed were omitted altogether? In that case we would have been left with no option but to take the perplexing interpolations with a pinch of salt in the absence of any clue to negate them as such.

## ***Chapter 1***

### ***Arjuna's Dilemma***

In this opening chapter, the grand stage for the discourse nonpareil is set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Gathered with their armies are the estranged cousins, the Pāndavās and the Kauravās, all set to join the battle. After reviewing the relative strengths of the opposing formations, Duryodhana, the Kaurava prince, fancies his chances. On the other hand, Arjuna, alias Pārtha, the spearhead of the Pāndava forces, is beset with moral indignation. He begins to see the futility of a fratricidal war that would result in the death of kith and kin in numbers. To Lord Krishna, who dons the role of his charioteer, a distressed Arjuna enumerates the ills that visit society in the wake of wars. Exasperated in the end, he expresses his intent to rescind from the impending war regardless.

The contrasting attitudes of the principal combatants of the Battle of Mahabharata are illustrative of the dualities inherent in human nature, exemplified by man's proclivities. Duryodhana as well as Arjuna meticulously prepared for the battle ahead, and both were bent upon fighting to the finish. But when the chips are down, while Duryodhana dreamt of victory, Arjuna suffered from qualms. It is this inherent duality of human nature that so prominently figures in Lord Krishna's discourse in the coming chapters.

In popular parlance, this chapter, comprising 47 *slokas* (verses), is known as *Arjuna Vishāda Yoga*, *Arjuna's Grief*. However, it is worth noting that though Arjuna's demeanor in the battlefield personifies grief, it's the dilemma of his persona that gives cause to it. Thus, there is merit in this chapter being rechristened as *Arjuna's Dilemma*. On the other hand, it is the supreme irony, or in the fitness of things, depending on how one views it, that this Treatise of Self-help should begin with Dhṛutarāshṭra's query, whose blind love towards his son Duryodhana brought things to this pass.

One might notice the inconsistency in Duryodhana's assessment of Pāndava forces in that while in s3-s6 he considers them formidable; in s10 he dismisses them as pygmies. Maybe it has something to do with his state of mind on the eve of war.

1

Thus spoke Dhṛutarāshṭra:  
Appraise Sanjay as my sons  
Gathered at the battleground  
Face the sons of my sibling  
Eager for the war on hand.

2

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Eyeing Pāndavs there lined up  
So to assess relative strengths  
Reached Duryodhan, Dron in time.

3

Find āchārya, said the Prince,  
Pāndav force thus there arrayed  
None other than by Drushtadyumna  
Whom thou taught all tricks of war.

4

Virat 'n Drupad, so Yuyudhāna  
With Bhim 'n Arjun they stand out.

5

Dhrushtaket, the one to dread  
King of Kashi and Purujit  
Kuntibhoj 'n Saibyā too  
Chekitān, their force augment.

6

Uttamouj 'n Yudhāmanyu  
Abhimanyu so Vikrānta  
Draupadi's offspring not to speak  
Five-star generals all no less.

7

For thy feel of our own strength  
Roll-call heroes of ours O, revered.

8

Thou with Bhishm, Karn 'n Kripa  
Make all four our Field Marshals,  
Bhurisrav, Aswathām 'n Vikarn  
Our Marshals, near Field Marshals.

9

With their lives on line for me  
Adept at weaponry varied all  
Abound valorous in our ranks  
Past masters of group warfare.

10

Nurses Bhishmā force our vast  
Lot it's Bhimā's tend their small.

11

Let's close ranks in well laid files  
Cover we flanks for Bhishmā's guard.

12

Words by these moved  
Grandsire Bhishm,  
Warrior verily unrivalled  
War cry he gave with his conch.

13

Egged by Bhishmā, geared Kauravs  
War cries their rent, those high skies.

14

Krishna 'n Arjun, in their turn  
From chariot of white stallions  
Gave in kind they with kindred.

15

With Panchajanya, Lord Krishna  
Broke sound barriers with Arjun  
Who blew to hilt Devadatta  
As blared Bhima, his Paundra.

16

Blew conch Yudhisthir full throated  
Anantavijaya in tandem  
With his siblings, Nakul 'n Sahadev,  
Blew who Sughosh 'n Manipushpak.

17

King of Kashi, master archer  
Sikhandi Marshal, their formidable  
Sāthyaki, Drushtadyumn 'n Virāt  
Warriors they all never vanquished,

18

Drupada as well Draupadi's progeny  
With their hero Abhimanyu  
Blew, O monarch, at one go  
Conchs of theirs to deafening sound.

19

Tumult that ensued shook the ground  
Bewildered Kauravs, as skies roared.

20

When came time to join lines  
So it happened O my Lord  
With his Gandiv in harness  
Hanumān's ensign in flutter  
Arjun stared at Kauravs hard  
And thus spoke to Lord Krishna.

21/22

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Pray posit chariot ours upfront  
So that I can have a look  
At those itching for this war.

23

Time I discern those backing  
Duryodhan the evil minded.

24

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Upfront Krishna took Arjun  
In their chariot drawn by four.

25

Beseeced Krishna then Arjun  
That he behold Bhishm 'n Dron  
As well all those there gathered.

26

Espied Arjun his clansmen  
Grandads, uncles, brothers and all  
Teachers as well friends of note.

27

At the sight of  
His kinsmen,  
He in distress  
Spoke worried.

28

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Disturb kinsfolk here gathered  
Feel I parched, it nauseates too.

29

Horrify no end prospects war  
Un-grips Gandiv, looks I'm sick.

30

Looks like it's an illusion  
Lord I envision bad omens all.

31

Crave I not for power or pelf  
What's it worth to kill Kauravs?

32

Know not avails what empire  
What sort pleasures it entails!

33

Whom all we wish well in life  
Here they face us risking same.

34

Us they oppose  
Dads, grand-dads  
Sons, grandsons, so uncles  
Brothers-in-law 'n teachers too!

35

Were the stakes be sky high like  
Ruling earth 'n heaven as well  
Let those Kauravs itch for fight  
I won't have this war on hand.

36

Go as they on sinful path  
Why earn sin by slaying them.

37

See I no gain by their end  
Why then kill our kith 'n kin?

38

Blinded by greed, bent on deceit  
Fail they foresee, war ruins the race.

39

Wiser for the woes of wars  
Why not Lord we rescind now.

40

Die aged en masse dharma's votaries  
Won't that let go youth ours haywire?

41

Sex ratio adverse that war ensues  
Turns women soft on caste barriers.

42

Fallen women all go to hell  
What is more their bastards rob  
Posthumous rites of forebearers.

43

Liaisons low of women wanton  
Set our race on ruinous course.

44

Is it not said, O My Lord  
Fail who dharma are hell bound.

45

What urge killing kith and kin,  
Why should we sin lusting crown?

46

Disarm I now on my own  
Let them harm me if they deem.

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Thus O Raja  
Despaired Arjun  
Arms he threw  
And sat distressed.

*Ends thus  
Arjuna's Dilemma,  
The First Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita  
Treatise of self-help.*

## Chapter 2

### **All about Life**

This character defining chapter of the Gita comprising 72 *slokas*, known as *sāṅkhyā yoga*, Realization through Knowledge, is regarded by many, as the peerless part of the great epic. Arjuna's dilemma, meanwhile, turns into grief, as the horrific prospect of slaying Bhishma, his revered granduncle, and Drona, his venerated guru, sinks into his consciousness. Bogged down by sentiment, Arjuna appeals to Lord Krishna for guidance. The Lord's response starting with the epoch making eleventh *sloka*,

*'Averring as knowing  
Worried over trivia!  
Reckon never wise  
Dead and alive both,'*

is indeed the curtain raiser to the grand discourse.

It is apparent that the sentiment of causing death and destruction plagues Arjuna. Thus, Lord Krishna brings the very issue to the fore to dispel the unwarranted fear of death by stressing upon the trans-migratory nature of the indwelling spirit of all beings. Then the Lord proceeds to enlighten Arjuna about his duty to fight as a warrior besides touching upon the infamy of surrender.

To enable Arjuna overcome the predicament of attachment, Lord Krishna elaborates upon the precepts and practices of detached action, besides its spiritual and philosophical connotations. As a way of caution, the Lord finally explains to Arjuna how his sensual nature hinders man to act in true detachment. This chapter, indeed, is the spectrum supreme of the kaleidoscope of wisdom that Bhagavad Gita is.

1  
Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
In pity Krishna  
Addressed Arjuna,  
Bogged in sorrow  
With tears profuse.

2  
Thus spoke the Lord:  
Oh, what affliction  
At this juncture!

Wholly un-Aryan  
Unholy as well!!

3

Mind-set impotent that unnerves  
Strengthen thou for fight on hand.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Adore as I, how dare I  
Make Bhishma 'n Dron target?

5

Better I go with begging bowl  
Than earn disgrace slaying them,  
Would the scepter ever glitter  
In the bloodstained hands of mine?

6

Those us oppose  
We hate hurting,  
What use war  
Who victors are?

7

About my duty I'm in doubt  
Tell me kindly what is right.

8

Beset by doubts,  
Saddled by grief  
Would I be joyous  
Were I the king?

9

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Bent to rescind  
Arjun had no more to speak.

10

Make I privy O my Lord  
Speaks as Krishna to Arjun  
Stood who there in confusion.

11

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Averring as knowing  
Worried over trivia!  
Reckon never wise  
Dead and alive both.

12

You and Me  
As well these,  
Have had past  
Future as well.

13

Wise all realize  
Embodies selfsame spirit in one  
From birth to death, in every birth.

14

Sensual feelings, grief 'n joy  
Transient are like, heat and cold.

15

Weigh who pain 'n pleasure equal  
Such are those on path freedom.

16

What's not real, it's never been  
And that's true, it's ever there  
That's how wise all came to see.

17

Spirit in lay us All-Pervading  
Given that not to destruction,  
What sense doth it make to think  
That's immutable gets destroyed!

18

Perish all bodies, Spirit not therein  
Know this truth, and take up arms.

19

With no slayer, nor one slain  
Whoso feels that he might kill  
It's in delusion that he harps.

20

Unbound being ever unborn  
Ageless since it's endless too  
Goes on Spirit, beyond life-span.

21

Spirit as entity hath no birth  
How can thou kill what's not born!

22

Change as men fade if clothes  
So doth Spirit as frames are worn.

23

Hurts no weapon the Spirit in thee  
Nor scathe elements, wind, water 'n fire.

24

Unalterable 'n Eternal  
Immovable but pervades all  
Permanent 'n so Everlasting  
Spirit thus none can ever destruct.

25

Can sans form Spirit get bound?  
Get right answer thou won't burn.

26

Prima facie if thou feel  
Subject Spirit is to rebirths  
Why grieve over end of frame?

27

Dies as one  
For like rebirth,  
Why feel sad  
Of what's cyclic.

28

Isn't thy lament over that  
Un-manifested to start with  
Gets manifested just as guest  
And bids adieu in due course.

29

Seen in wonder, spoken in awe  
Spirit none knows that lies in him.

30

Dies not Spirit as die beings  
What for man then tends to grieve!

31

Being a warrior dharma thine  
That thee fight with all thy might.

32

For martyrs of unsought wars  
Ever open are heavenly gates.

33

If thee back out from duty  
Imperil thou thy own dharma  
And that earns thee infamy.

34

What for lead a dishonored life  
Why leave legend dubious behind!

35

Amiss be taken thine intent  
Treat thee coward thy friends 'n foes.

36

Count on thou thy detractors  
Besmirch they thy character,  
Damned be thine obituary  
By their campaign of slander.

37

If slain, heaven; alive, it's reign  
Resolve to fight with right intent.

38

Shed thy sentiment, guilt unhinge  
Eye not gain as wage thou war.

39

It's this knowledge that liberates  
And helps thee act, with no restraint.

40

Goes not waste  
Effort thine ever,  
Zeal for action  
Frees from fear.

41

In their resolve  
Succeed firm,  
Mind as wavers  
Lose infirm.

42

Unwise use all enticing  
Flowery language to further  
Rituals Vedic in their scores  
Not the knowledge of Vedas.

43

Eyeing heaven with mind mundane  
Go for ceremonies such in hope  
Of having best of both the worlds.

44

Pursue if thou wants with zeal  
Instincts then would spin thy mind.

45

Aspects three of life, reveal Vedas four  
Transcend thou dualities, in them as inherent.

46

Well-waters draw Veda-dependent  
Banks on reservoir dwell all realized.

47

Hold as patent on thy work  
Reckon thou not on royalty  
With no way to ceasing work  
Never mind outcome but go on.

48

It's but yoga  
If thou strive  
Wants without  
Emotions bereft.

49

Work well greedy with motive  
Work wise not with result in mind.

50

Wise not sentiment bring to work  
That's hallmark of art of work.

51

Freed from bonds with mind even  
Act wise regardless ever composed.

52

Clears if reason one's illusion  
Bothers he not to what's over  
Or for what might lie in store.

53

Stands as firm mind thy clear  
Steer thou clear of path rituals.

54

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
How to spot the yogi true  
Were he there ever in the crowd?

55

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Blessed are strong with blissful self  
Helps them that slight all that tempts.

56

Oblivious of misfortune  
Not the one to crave for fun  
Sways not ever by his feelings  
Stays thus yogi ever even.

57

Unfettered by attachment  
Compliments to indifferent  
Adversity by unshaken  
Wisdom thus is personified.

58

Stimuli those of organs sensory  
Tortoise like, wise draw into shell.

59

Senses reined  
Who so abstains,  
Sans he longing  
Turns he godly.

60

Senses as may tend them rash  
Wise as well stray, from right path.

61

Rein in senses, hone thine effort  
Rely on Supreme, that's true wisdom.

62

Leans man on  
Lends what charm,  
Brings that want  
And that's fault.

63

Despair is what clouds reason  
Brings that ruin through deeds mindless.

64

Yield to senses sans craving  
Cap as thou thy wants dubious.

65

Calm that offsets woes of life  
And that equable makes thy mind.

66

Lacks mind focus as it strays  
Robs that peace 'n joy thereby.

67

As in seas sans boat rudder  
So course sensual man loses.

68

With tight leash on their senses  
Wise with ease lead poised lives.

69

Ignoring all ignorant crave  
Wise take note what folks not note.

70

Subdues as sea, rivers it holds  
Wise keep cool while wants taming.

71

Freed of ego 'n wants as well  
Blessed are wise who lack longing.

72

State it's that of true being  
With no tenseness of being,  
Life ever in that mode being  
Makes what one with All-being.

*Ends thus:*

*All about Life,  
The Second Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 3**

#### ***Theory of Action***

This chapter of 42 slokas, known as *karma yoga*, Theory of Action, covers the whole gamut of action. It is apparent that not all slokas here could be originals. It is pertinent to note that Lord Krishna was unequivocal, in s 42- s45, and s53 of the previous chapter, about the fallacy of the Vedic rituals, and the lack of wisdom in those that clamour for ceremonies, which promise rewards here and in hereafter.

Given that postulation and going by the contextual nature of this chapter that emphasizes action, the s9 -s16 that eulogize the benefits of ritualistic sacrifices should be viewed. In this context, it is pertinent to note that while describing the Omnipresence of Supreme Spirit in chapter 10, it is postulated that among the Vedas, the Supreme Spirit is *Sāma Veda*, symbolizing music (s22), and not *Rig Veda* or *Yajur Veda*, both associated with ritualism. And again, in (s25) of the same chapter, it is averred that among the sacrifices, the Lord is *tapo yagña*, prayer muted, and not *Asvamedha*, the horse sacrifice. Thus, these eight slokas seem to be clear interpolations.

Besides, s17, s18, and s35 are not only out of context but also break the continuity of the discourse. S24 is but an analogy of s23 and thus is an interpolation. However, the

readers may note that these slokas, if interpreted in the ritualistic sacrificial sense, would broadly convey that -

9. Man is not attached to his actions performed in ritualistic sacrifices but all other actions bind him.

10. The Creator wanted mankind to prosper through sacrifices, which shall be the milch cow of man's desires.

11. Foster the gods through sacrifices

12. Fostered by sacrifices, gods would bestow desired enjoyments, but they are thieves who do not return anything to them (gods).

13. Those that partake the remnants of sacrificial food are sinless.

14. Food that sustains mankind comes from rains, which are but the outcome of sacrificial ceremonies.

15. Brahma is seated in sacrifice.

16. Who follow the above regimen would attain moksha.

To appreciate the background for these interpolations, one might refer to 'All about Interpolations' of this book. Bypassing these would tend them on the path of sequential thinking outlined by the Lord for the enlightenment of man.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Capping wants, if betters action

How come Thou then push for war!

2

Find I hard to grasp all this

Thou be forthright, what is right.

3

Thus spoke the Lord:

Apply knowledge 'n be freed

Or thou make tango, with forgo

Precepts these yore, I fashioned.

4

Work-shy being, is no freedom

Dormant being, makes no living.

5

None like for man, non-action

Keeps him nature ever engaged.

6

Refrains if one, ever craving

Restraint it's but misleading.

7

Reins as carnal, tucked in mind

Strive who doth in deeds excel.

8

Lest thee should stake survival  
Turn thy back not on thy work.

19

Ever thee act at par duty  
Let that be thy goal of life.

20

Lead mankind in Janakā's route  
To moksha en route deeds selfless.

21

As and when thou prove thy worth  
Emulates world then acts all thine.

22

Left with none to gain or prove  
Keep I Myself ever engaged.

23

Were I to fail to self-exert  
Man might follow suit as well.

25

Strive as wise to act freely  
Get bound unwise ever restrained.

26

Waste not breath, ill-informed with  
Wise show ways through their own deeds.

27

Gloat as egotists of their deeds  
Sourced are acts in one's nature.

28

Those that see the senses lie  
Behind the deeds are truly freed.

29

Let go wise, who swear by  
Joys of life that nature tends.

30

Act not with fear or favour  
Unto me leave right 'n wrong.

31

Whoso takes, this advice  
Feels no burden ever engaged.

32

Who this lets go mindlessly  
Gropes in darkness, ever in life.

33

Beings as by nature ruled  
In spite of their self-restraint  
Wise too tend to lose their way.

34

Pays it to see grips avarice  
Senses those thine nature tends.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Why should one with right intent  
Stray ever on the wayward ways!

37

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Well, it's passion, lust 'n wrath  
Drag that man on path painful.

38

Flame 'n mirror as shrouded  
Without let by smoke 'n dust  
As well embryo in the womb  
Wisdom is by wants clouded.

39

Wise all tend to cap all wants  
Which like fire all burn to core.

40

Veiled off wisdom sees not man  
Mind and body steeped in wants.

41

Rein in matter with thy mind  
Thus thou nip thy wants in bud.

42

Score over senses sensuous feelings  
Betters that mind, bettered by knowing  
But above all Spirit that reins supreme.

43

Let thy Spirit  
Rule the roost,  
Restrain thou  
Thy mind mischievous.

Ends thus:  
*Theory of Action,*  
*The Third Chapter*  
*Of Bhagavad-Gita*  
*Treatise of self-help.*

## ***Chapter 4***

### ***Practical Wisdom***

This chapter of 42 slokas, known as *jnana yoga*, Spiritual Knowledge, is replete with practical wisdom as well.

So in this chapter as with the previous one, there are interpolations galore. *Slokas* from 24 to 32 that are of religious/ritualistic nature seem clearly out of context and character. Prior to this seemingly interpolated body of eleven *slokas*, the nature of the Supreme Spirit and the conduct of those who realize it are dealt with. Thus, the discontinuity in the text brought about by the body of these interpolative *slokas* would be self-evident. Among these is s24, in which the nature of Brahman is described in terms of sacrificial fire, the oblation, its ladle, and the sacrifice et al, an antithesis of the *Gita* at any rate.

And the other *slokas* of this group that describe states of yogic practices may be enlightening in their own way though out of context. But s34 that advises Arjuna to seek wise counsel is irrelevant in the context of the discourse fashioned to set his fears at rest in the battlefield of Kurukshetra itself.

That brings us to the first of the caste-oriented precepts in the *Gita* - *chātur varnyam mayā srustam* (s13). The plain reading of this *sloka* would have us believe that the Lord Himself created the four-caste system, of Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, to suit the inclinations of a given soul towards certain earmarked calling of social and spiritual life in this world. And then, as a rider that is vague at the very best; Lord Krishna says that though He is the author of it all, He should not be deemed as the doer. These so-called caste characteristics and duties as well figure in s 41-s48 of the concluding chapter, which are discussed therein.

It is imperative that we try to see whether these *slokas* belong to the original text, or are mere later day insertions, meant to sanctify the Aryan caste credo with the underpinning of 'exclusivity of duties' through the venerated *Gita*. It should not be lost on one that s11's return of favour by the Lord is juxtaposing to the stated detachment of His as espoused in s14. On the other hand, s12 that is akin to s20, ch.7, itself an interpolation, and s13 do not jell with the spirit of the philosophy.

Just the same, one school of thought tends to view *chātur varnyam* as a way of general differentiation amongst men. However, this would not cut much ice since common sense suggests that Lord Krishna would have been aware that this turn of phrase is likely to be viewed in caste colours rather than in general terms. That being the case, the Lord would have been circumspect in his word choices to convey his scheme of things governing man's birth if they aren't as narrow as the Aryan caste system propounds.

Or is the *chātur varnyam* His real will, whether one likes it or not? The answer could be found in the Lord's averments as one reads on. The four types of beings the Lord identifies by their nature and disposition are - the virtuous, the vile, the passionate, and the deluded. Isn't the proposition that people of a given nature and disposition could be bracketed into one single caste so absurd? After all, even a given family provides many

shades of human nature in its members, won't it? That being the case, could Krishna be so naive as not to know about it! Above all, hasn't He declared in s 29, ch.9, '*None I favour, slight I none / Devout Mine all gain Me true*'.

*Slokas* like *chātur varnyam* that would be encountered intermittently in the *Gita* are but mischievous, if not malicious, interpolations meant to buttress the Aryan caste prejudices and thus should be dismissed as such.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Advice this to Sun I gave  
Told he Manu  
Ikshvāku thus got in turn.

2

Followed world My word for long  
Lost which mankind in due course.

3

It's but love I nurse for thee  
Made Me reveal this Secret  
Wisdom Supreme I gave Sun.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Born of now, how come Thou  
Did Sun advise there for long!

5

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Born all here times umpteen  
Aware am I but know not thou.

6

Beyond the pale of birth 'n death  
On My volition I take birth.

7

Wanes if good 'n vile gain reign  
Know it's then that I come forth.

8

It's thus I from time to time  
Manifest here to uproot ill  
And uphold well for public good.

9

Grasp who this true self of Me  
Are bound to become one with Me.

10

So with who lead poised life  
Reining in their base instincts.

14

Detached Am from what happens  
It's this knowledge that frees man.

15

Men of yore all came to know  
That's how one can free himself.

16

Aspects action, inaction too  
Wont to puzzle the wise even.

17

Apart actions' rights 'n wrongs  
Inaction no less confounds man.

18

Grasping action, in non-action  
Inaction in action, discern wise.

19

Whoso privy to this truth  
Gives up wants all senses seek.

20

He that content leans on none  
Resigned he lives in thick of things.

21

Mind if keeps thy greed at bay  
It's no sin thou meet thy needs.

22

One that truly well realized  
Happy being with his share  
Rids of envy from his mind  
Easy he feels ever engaged  
Treats he alike grief 'n joy  
Wins 'n losses not to speak.

23

Acts of man to favour none  
Grace they have of deeds selfless.

33

Better wise deeds than acts selfless  
Wise thus strive to better themselves.

35

As 'n when thou this realize  
In us both then world discern  
And get rid of thy illusions.

36

Voyage by thy boat knowledge  
Helps thee cross all seas sinful.

37

Fire as wood to ashes turns  
So spark wisdom burns thy sloth.

38

None that betters this wisdom  
Realize thou by striving hard.

39

Hone thy senses steeped in faith  
And thou be wise 'n freed of all.

40

Besides those who this doubt  
Here as above suffer uncouth.

41

Doubts at bay with analyzed thought  
Detached deeds of applied knowledge  
That's how regardless wise all work.

42

Thus O Arjun,  
Sever doubts with thy sword wisdom  
And fight thy foes with all thy strength.

*Ends thus:*

*Practical Wisdom,  
The Fourth Chapter,  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

## Chapter 5

### **Art of Renunciation**

This chapter of 29 slokas, known as karma sanyāsa yoga, Renunciation of Action, is in response to Arjuna's plea at the beginning of the chapter, '*Pray be clear, as Thee aver / Act 'n give up in selfsame breath*'.

Lord Krishna sets the tone for self-help in this chapter with the opening statement, '*Give up all 'n thou be freed / So's the case with selfless work / But know latter scores much better*'.

S18 avers the Omnipresence of the Supreme in Brahmans, cows, elephants, dogs and dog eaters. This tasteless description could be but an interpolation as it is so ill behoves the Lord's eloquence and sophistication of expression seen throughout. Incidentally, the succeeding s19 makes it clear that whoever recognizes Him in all beings attains the Supreme State in life itself. It may be noted that s29 and s30 of next chapter also run along the same lines.

S27-s28 that deal with yogic practices and s29, which asserts the Supreme as the beneficiary of sacrificial rituals, are but interpolation for reasons that bear no repetition.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Pray be clear, as Thee aver  
Act 'n give up in selfsame breath.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Give up all 'n thou be freed  
So is the case with selfless work  
But know latter scores much better.

3

Wise neither want, nor they shun  
That's how they give up ever engaged.

4

Way action 'n path learning  
Know not ignorant not different.

5

Work highway 'n lane freedom  
Know the learned are the same.

6

What thou forego if thee cease  
Deeds selfless make acts forsake.

7

Such one realized  
Self-willed, dutiful  
Within self remains  
Without ever engaged.

8

Privy to this will realize  
On his body as it works  
Say hath he none to name one.

9

Wise do realize needs physical  
Urges are they driven by genes.

10

Spreads on lotus leaves as water  
Sticks none sin of deeds dueous.

11

Wise in selfless work engage  
Forego while they self-purify.

12

Wise ever stay cool never in want  
Bog down but naive ever in want.

13

Covetous not 'n ever laid back  
Wise in tune with Supreme lay.

14

It's his nature, not the Spirit  
Makes man act by wants induced.

15

Takes not Supreme credit or fault  
Grasp none have of this uncouth.

16

He that keeps his bias at bay  
Sun-like he shines being wise.

17

In clear conscience 'n fairness  
Gives man freedom faith in Him.

19

Keeps who equity ever in thought  
Faultless being attains he Brahman.

20

In state Brahman,  
Gloats never man as smiles fortune  
Nor loses heart when things go wrong.

21

Joys induced all tire one soon  
Stay self-joyous all blissful souls.

22

End as in grief joys of flesh  
Go not wise for pleasures such brief.

23

Subdue lust 'n rein in wrath  
Leads that to thy state of joy.

24

Live in ease the true knowing  
Enjoy they all within themselves.

25

With pure intent sans ill-will  
Realized all reach State Supreme.

26

Unmoved by his mind subdued  
Stays ever free the self-realized.

*Ends thus:*

*Art of Renunciation,  
The Fifth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 6**

#### **Practice of Restraint**

This chapter of 47 *slokas*, known as *ātma samyama yoga*, *Self Restraint*, deals with all aspects of self-control needed for renunciation in action. Here Arjuna's queries as to what would be the fate of man were he to fail midway, in his efforts at self-control (s37). Even if it were the case, assures the Lord, still one wouldn't come to grief here or hereafter (s40). What is more, after being born many times over, eventually he attains *moksha* (s45). Further in s46, the Lord asserts that such a man is superior to the ritualistic character, and concludes in s47 that he remains His most blessed devotee.

Seen in this background, s 41 and s42 are clearly interpolations not only for affecting the continuity of the text but also for what they contain. S41 would have it that those who perform the *asvamedha* (ritualistic horse sacrifice) would reach heaven to be born again rich.

Likewise s 42 would have us that, or such would be born in learned homes. It would seem that s46-s47 are digressions, but in effect they carry forward the Lord's discourse from s32, at which point Arjuna interrupted Him with his queries.

S10-s17 deal with aspects of ascetic practice and do seem to be interpolations, even going by what is stated in the very opening verse, besides breaking the continuity in the proposition.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Forego none if forsake chores  
Eye not gain 'n thou be freed.

2

If thou let go its godly  
Makes that hard thy self-interest.

3

Uphill though the way forsake  
As 'n when thou make it there  
Stay thus put with no more strain.

4

Reining senses sans motive  
Wise on selfless deeds focus.

5

Noble or naughty it's thy make  
Self thus thine but shapes thyself.

6

Mind if reined, it's thy friend  
Foe it turns, let when loose.

7

Overcome if vicissitudes  
Vibe thee well with Me Supreme.

8

Valuable or be otherwise  
Treat all alike self-realized  
Thus they remain ever even.

9

Wise is one, folks who treats  
None the fear 'n sans favour.

18

With no longing freed of want  
It's then thou reach yogic state.

19

Rooted in self yogi true  
Lamp he likens in still air.

20

Restrain mind in self-focus  
Beatitude of life that makes.

21

Transcends senses if thy mind  
It's then thou reach state of bliss.

22

Rooted so on peak of bliss  
Wise not bother lows of life.

23

So to live in yogic state  
Untie wise from life's bothers.

24

Wise keep tabs on self-impulse  
Affects to without are they immune.

25

Wed wise focus with calm mind  
Makes that life of theirs tranquil.

26

Pulled by wants as trips the mind  
Gain ground wise by self-leverage.

27

Passions languid, mind tranquil  
Keep man ever on blissful course.

28

Mind that's pure with self-control  
Leads that man to State Brahman.

29

Espy wise in right outlook  
Others in self 'n vice versa.

30

Discern Me in what they see  
Ever they find Me nearby them.

31

Me who sees in all beings  
He's the one that dwells in Me.

32

He's the yogi self-feels who  
Joys of others 'n grief as well.

33

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Frail being man, fail I see  
Yoga Thou espouse, lasting in practice.

34

Can one ever tame his mind  
Like the wind that yields to none?

35

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Calm 'n custom bring in ropes  
Tough ask though to subdue mind.

36

Fail keep going unruly  
Persevere self-willed all the way.

37

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
What if one  
Throws up all  
Lacks who zeal  
Hath though faith?

38

Resolve if dissolves in mid-course  
Won't that be like scattered clouds?

39

Kindly dispel all my doubts  
Think I none of else for that.

40

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Strives if one to enrich self  
Ends not in grief here or there.

43

Harnessed habit, of births past  
Helps man strive to self-realize.

44

With the reason thus imbibed  
Realized outwit scholars there.

45

Awareness of births of yore  
Helps the striving gain moksha.

46

Ahead in protocol comes yogi  
Learned, ascetics, as all sticklers for rituals.

47

He's the yogi of yogis  
Self-inner who fills with Me.

*Ends thus:*

*Practice of Restraint,  
The Sixth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

## Chapter 7

### **Know the Spirit**

This chapter of 30 *slokas*, known as *gjnāna vigjnāna yoga*, Spiritual knowledge and Secular intelligence, is about understanding the nature of the Supreme through knowing and meditation.

However, s20-s23 besides breaking the continuity in the character of the discourse, would advocate worship of gods for boon seeking that Krishna chastises in s42-s44, ch.2. And thus these *slokas* undoubtedly are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
How to retain Me in mind  
He in yoga comes to know.

2

Make thee privy that knowledge  
Leaves that no scope for some more.

3

Rarely beings seek their self  
Of them but a few Me grasp.

4

Earth 'n ether, fire 'n air  
Water, mind, sense 'n self  
Elements are of My Nature.

5

It's this Nature holds all worlds  
But above 'n apart is My Nature.

6

While My Higher Nature brings  
Ends all that Low Nature Mine.

7

Better than Me none exists  
On Me hinges whatever exists.

8

I'm that what is sapid in water  
I'm the glow of sun and moon  
I'm the thunder above in skies  
Verily I'm the virility of males.

9

Odour of this earth is Me  
Heat of fire 'n life in being  
As well wisdom in forsake.

10

I'm the seed of all beings  
Intellect as well man's valour.

11

It's Me strength of even life  
As well ardour of sex in order.

12

Virtue, passion so too delusion  
Send I forth though all of them  
Come to dwell in none of them.

13

Spellbound by My these natures  
Knows not man My true nature.

14

If thee forsake well and true  
To Me then thou come 'n grasp  
Natures these Mine illusions.

15

Who in Supreme hath no faith  
Gripped are by these illusions  
And thus go on path wayward.

16

Distressed, desirous 'n knowing  
Such pious are those Me worship.

17

Of these but the steadfast man  
With pure intent gets My nod.

18

Noble as all worship Me  
The knower true is selfsame Me.

19

Once in a while  
Births after many,  
Born who knows  
I pervade worlds.

24

Unmanifest Am State Supreme  
But saddle Me with form uncouth.

25

Dull in delusion won't perceive  
Me that's unborn veiled from them.

26

Am privy to what goes on  
But man hath no grasp of Me.

27

Illusions dual, want and wrath  
Ever in delusion keep they man.

28

Pure minded sans illusions  
On Me such of virtue lean.

29

Seek all those who My refuge  
See they Brahman ever in self.

30

Me Be-All 'n End -All grasps  
Me he ponders on deathbed.

*Ends thus:*

*Know the Spirit,  
The Seventh Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita  
Treatise of self-help.*

### Chapter 8

#### ***Cycle of Creation***

This chapter of 28 *slokas*, known as *akshara parabrahma yoga* - The Indestructible Brahman - emphasizes the need of un-wavered devotion to the Supreme so as to attain Him. It also describes the science of meditation to reach the Supreme by understanding the nature of the Brahman. And s 22 is a seemingly concluding statement of the Lord that only through un-swerved devotion the Supreme could be reached from which there is no return (s 21).

Then appear s23 to s28 which if literally taken would imply that if one dies when the moon is on the ascent he would go to heaven and, to hell if it's other way round. Needless to say, these *slokas* spelling superstition in an otherwise thought-elevating treatise are but interpolations.

It is worth noting that Sir Edwin Arnold dismissed these as the work of some *vedānti* and thought it fit, justifiably at that, not to include them in his '*Song Celestial*'. In this connection it may be noted that the relationship between the state in which a person dies and his imminent rebirth is covered in s 14 and s15 of c14, which seem to be authentic.

It can be seen that s5, places the cart before the horse. Besides, s9-s14 too, are interpolations going by their content that's out of context. It is worth noting that s1-s4, s6-s8 and s15-s22, if read together would bear an unmistakable continuity of argument that the interpolations deprive.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
O Lord appraise what's Brahman  
Lies what within 'n backs action  
Nature of deities besides the beings.

2

What is that guides bodily acts,  
What makes yogis realize Thee?

3

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Self-Imperishable is Brahman  
But dwells it yet there in beings  
Brings that forth is Act Supreme.

4

Perish as beings all in time  
Spirit that lasts of them is Me.

6

In the end the way one tends  
Charts that future course he takes.

7

If thou act with this in mind  
In the end thou gain Me true,  
By My word now opt for war  
With thy strength 'n skill I gave.

8

Me they reach whoso keep  
On Me focus as they work.

15

Having come to stay with Me  
Get they rid of births and deaths.

16

Journey to Brahman holds return ticket  
Journeys back none abode from Mine.

17

Wise all realize days Brahman  
Ages thousands make with nights.

18

By day as He brings beings  
Un-manifests He all by night.

19

It's all rebirths through His day  
But with nightfall cease they all  
As He wakes up puts He back.

20

My State Supreme that never ends  
Un-manifested it's above Brahman.

21

It's My Abode that Supreme  
For man to reach not to leave.

It's through devotion that thee gain  
State Supreme that pervades worlds.

*Ends thus:*

*Cycle of Creation,  
The Eighth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 9**

#### ***The Sacred Secret***

This chapter of 34 *slokas*, known as *rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyā yoga, Supreme Knowledge and Supreme Secret*, describes various ways of attaining the Supreme that lends itself readily for interpolations.

In s13, it is stated that the realized man constantly and single-mindedly remains devoted to the Supreme and in s14 it is averred that such ever remain united with Him in meditation. But it is only in s22 that the protection of the Supreme to those engaged in His service in true devotion is assured.

While s23 states that those who worship other gods with faith, worship Him only, albeit defectively, s25 pictures varied outcome of worshipping other gods, a contradiction of s3, ch.12. And in s24, He is the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Sacrifice, an anathema to the philosophy of the Gita.

Also s15 is but a digression to facilitate s16-s21 and s23-s25. What is more, there could be some omissions from the original, given the seemingly incomplete exposition of the promised dharma in s2.

Further, in s 30 and s 31, it is said that even a reformed sinner is dear and valuable to Him. Then in s 32 it is stated that women, Vaisyās and Sudrās could win His favor through devotion, sounding as if they are all in an inferior league. Leave aside the Lord's averment in many a context in this text that the Supreme Spirit lies in all beings, it is specifically stated in s34 of ch.10 that He symbolizes all that is glorious in woman. Given this, and the background of interpolations, s32 surely is a case of trespass.

S33 of this chapter is but a jointing medium of the said obnoxious verse and in itself is patronizing in nature towards the virtuous Brahmans. S7, that contravenes s15-s16 of ch.8 and echoes the interpolative s18-s19 of this, is an interpolation. S34, which falls into a separate category, is seemingly an interpolation, for reasons explained in 'All about Interpolations'.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Unenvied as thou I would tell  
The art of leading fruitful life.

2

Supreme secret that's sacred  
Profound dharma for mankind  
Fair and simple, practicable.

3

Fail who follow this dharma  
Pay they price in recurring births.

4

Whatever is there I pervade  
In My ambit lay beings  
Though it's not the other way round.

5

Fail if thou to grasp it thus  
Feel as though I'm confined in  
What I bring forth 'n sustain.

6

Skies in rooted wind as spreads  
Dwell in Me though disperse all.

8

It's I make the Nature bring  
Beings hapless in their scores.

9

Since I function not in passion  
Bound Am none by acts all these.

10

It's the Nature ruled by Me  
Takes the world the way it goes.

11

Though Am Lord of all beings  
Give Me human form the naive  
And thus they do belittle Me.

12

Vile in delusion lead their lives  
In vainness they waste their time.

13

With Me in mind well-meaning  
See they beings sourced in Me.

14

With right intent 'n focus  
Such Me worship with true faith.

22

Those as meditate 'n worship  
Them I take My wings under.

26

Hold I dear a leaf even  
Offered when by pure minded.

27

Act thou throughout in good faith  
Thus thou make Me feel honored.

28

Rid be thou of all that binds  
Freed be thus thou come to Me.

29

None I favor; slight I none  
Devout Mine all gain Me true.

30

Start as wicked My worship  
Take them all as well realized.

31

Tend I them then turn even  
Devout Mine none go restive.

*Ends thus:*

*The Secret Sacred,  
The Ninth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

## Chapter 10

### **Discern the Divine**

This intriguing chapter of 42 *slokas*, known as *vibhooti yoga*, *Glories of the Supreme*, characterizes the Omnipresence of the Supreme Spirit. Well, for general human understanding, Lord Krishna identifies the best in heaven and earth that represent all that is glorious about Him.

One might note that His averment that *Sāma Veda* and *tapo yagjna*, meditative prayer, symbolize the glory of the Supreme was cited in the introduction to the third chapter. In the context of what Lord Krishna enumerates as symbolic of the 'Glory of the Supreme Spirit', it is interesting to note that He's the sovereign in humans in s27 but not Rama as one would have expected. However, Lord Rama enters the Hall of Fame as the first amongst the archers (s31).

Going by the dispassionate outlook towards life that Lord Krishna expostulates, it is but natural that Lord Rama who personifies attachment to the values of his time is not reckoned as the Glory of the Supreme Spirit. It is another matter that in the Hindu religio-cultural ethos, Lord Rama is revered as *purushottama*, the noblest human.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Ear thy lend My words peerless  
Bound they regale as thee gain.

2

Sourced though gods 'n seers in Me  
Grasp they have none of My source.

3

Me as Lord of all who sees  
Turns his back on wrongdoings.

4

Sourced in Me all faculties  
State of mind of beings too.

5

Varied I made vicissitudes  
As the case with attitudes.

6

Willed I birth of progenitors all  
Seven seers great 'n elders four  
Not to mention sovereign fourteen.

7

Grasps as one the power of Mine  
Keeps he would his mind then firm.

8

Who this gets in My worship  
Tends he then to turn to Me.

9

Whoso to Me thus taken  
Delight he takes in praising Me.

10

Him I help to realize that  
Which is needed to reach Me.

11

Doubts I dispel his for good  
Grant I wisdom to his thought.

12

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
O Lord Thou, Supreme Brahman  
Abode Ultimate, Purifier Primordial  
Indweller Permanent 'n God Primeval.

13

That's how sages down the ages  
Nārada foremost described Thee,  
Affirmed Asita, Devala 'n Vyāsā  
All of that now Thou confirm.

14

None can ever be sure of Thee  
Hold I true thus what Thou say.

15

God of gods  
O Lord of all,  
Thou but know  
Self Thy true.

16

Pray Thee confide Thy nature  
With which Thou all worlds transcend.

17

How to grasp all aspects Thine,  
How to engage Thee in mind?

18

Make me privy, O, My Lord  
Forms 'n attributes of Thyself.

19

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Of all countless Glories Mine  
Suffice thee knew a few of them.

20

I'm the Self of one and all  
I'm the beginning as well end  
Not to speak of in between.

21

Vishnu Am of all deities  
Sun the luminous of luminous  
Māreechi Am immortal  
As well moon the star of stars.

22

I am the Sāma of Vedas  
It's Me Indrā, god of gods  
Of all organs, mind is Me  
And so life in all beings.

23

Shankar Am the Lord of Lords  
Kuberā, richest of Yakshās  
Of the Vasus know Am Fire  
And Am Meru, peak foremost.

24

In those echelons ruled by gods  
It's Me Bruhaspathi priest of priests,  
Marshal that great Skand on earth  
Besides the ocean among the seas.

25

Bhrugur I am the well-realized  
So Am 'Om' that sound supreme,  
Of rituals Am prayer muted  
Himalayas high that kiss the skies.

26

I'm the fig, the tree foremost  
And so heavenly sage Nārad,  
Maestro divine Chitraradh Am  
Besides Kapila, the sage attained.

27

Uchhaisravas, Am horse foremost  
Nectar that was churned in seas  
Airāvat white, Indrā's elephant  
Sovereign whoso crowns mankind.

28

Vajrāyudh Am weapon mighty  
Kāmadhenu the cow holy  
Cupid who aids to sustain life  
Vāsuki the fierce king serpent.

29

It's Me Ananth of Nāgās  
Varun I am of aquatics,  
It's Me Aryamā, mane of manes  
Yama the ruler of beings.

30

Prahlād Am, the demon godly  
Among the reckoners, I'm the Time  
It's Me lion, of wildlife all  
As well Garud that rules the skies.

31

I'm the wind that purifies all  
Among the archers Rām I'm

I'm the shark that mighty fish  
And the Ganges, ever in flow.

32

Hinge I am that holds all worlds  
Source is Me of spiritual thought  
Of Vedanta, I'm pro contra.

33

Alpha Am of alphabets all  
Likeness I'm in like compounds  
I'm the time of endlessness  
It's Me Brahma of four heads.

34

I'm the death that devours all  
As well brings forth that beings  
Besides what makes woman's glory.

35

Am Sāma the grand octane  
Like none metre Gāyathri,  
Mārgasir pleasant month I am  
As well splendid spring season.

36

I'm the splendour of splendidous  
Besides fraud in dice as well  
I'm the goodness in great souls  
Effort that takes to succeed well.

37

It's Me Vasudev of Yadavs  
Of the Pandavs thou art Me,  
Know Am Vyāsa of sages  
Poet Laureate, Sukra great.

38

Justice I'm in every court  
Policy Am of all conquest,  
Secret I'm of every mute  
Wisdom Am of what is wise.

39

I'm the seed of all beings  
From Me apart none exists.

40

Endless are My attributes  
This brief is for just thy grasp.

41

All that's glorious all therein  
Is but spark of My splendour.

42

O dear friend need there none to delve in full  
Suffice to say it's portion Mine that supports all.

*Ends thus:*

*Discern the Divine,  
The Tenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 11**

#### ***Nature of Omnipresence***

This fascinating chapter of 55 *slokas*, known as *visvaroopa sandarsana yoga*, *Espial of the Universal Form*, is about the character of the Supreme Spirit. Lord Krishna enables Arjuna to espy the All-encompassing Universal Form of the Supreme Spirit by granting him the required ESP. The descriptive nature of the State Supreme falls in the realms of Universal Vision.

Owing to the improbability of their being, s9-s14, make an amusing reading. S3 states that Krishna grants Arjuna the divine sight required to espy His Universal Form. Of course, the ESP that Vyāsa granted Sanjaya (s75 ch.18) might have enabled him to monitor the goings on at Kurukshetra in order to appraise the blind king Dhṛitarāshṭra about the same.

Thus, only from Arjuna's averments Sanjaya could have gathered what the former was divining in the Universal Form, which obviously was beyond his own comprehension. But s10 - s14 have him describe the Universal Form as though he himself was witnessing the same, even before Arjuna utters a word about it. At the same time, the Lord made it clear in s52, 'Ever craved gods 'n angels too / Just to behold what thee beheld'.

Thus, the Universal Form that was seen by Arjuna surely was beyond the scope of Sanjaya's ESP. Hence, s9-s14 that picture beforehand what Arjuna would witness later, are clear interpolations. Contrast this with the parallel situation in s50-s51, when the Lord reassumes His human form, but handled differently by Sanjaya.

The s29 which seeks to emphasize what was already pictured in s28, albeit with not so appropriate a simile, could be but an interpolation.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Thy words compelling, Spirit about indwelling  
Uttered in compassion, dispelled my delusion.

2

Besides I've heard, about Thy glories  
Origins of beings, and how it all ends.

3

Thou art verily, what Thee aver  
Wish I espied, form Thy Divine.

4

If Thou so feel, I'm worthy  
Let me espy, Thy True Self.

5

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Divine I let thee, divinity Mine  
Of hues varied colours 'n kinds.

6

Find Adityās, twelve therein  
Vāsus eight, and Aswin twins  
Rudrās eleven 'n Maruts four-nine  
Wonders umpteen none else seen.

7

May thou discern in My frame  
Much more than thy thought would take.

8

Bestow thee that ESP  
Helps which espy form Supreme  
Beyond the pale of god's own sight.

15

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
In Thou find I  
Brahma on lotus,  
Gods and sages  
Beings 'n serpents!

16

With no beginning  
End none sighted,  
Boundless find I  
In Thee universe!

17

Find I blinding  
Light that blazing  
From Thy diadem  
Club and discus!

18

Thou art Supreme  
Indweller Ancient,  
Eternal Refuge  
Dharma's Guardian.

19

Eyes sun like  
And oven for mouth,  
How Thou radiate  
In arms thy manifold!

20

Fills Thy Frame  
The space entire,  
Makes Thy sight  
The worlds tremble.

21

See in Thee the angelic world  
Find them all Thou pray in awe  
Spot I sages in their scores  
Hear them extol, Thee in hymns.

22

Demigods all 'n celestial folk  
Stand they stunned 'n look at Thee.

23

Makes it awful sight Thine terrible  
Bear as Thou those weird organs.

24

Perplexed am I by Thy sight  
Seems I've lost my sense of self.

25

Discern I nadir in Thy face  
Pray assume now Form Normal.

26

See I Bhishmā, Dron 'n Karn  
Kauravs, ours, making way to mouth Thy wide.

27

Nauseates sight of teeth Thine terrible  
Gnashing heads of theirs in smithereens.

28

Rivers as run, towards the seas  
So these armies, towards Thy mouths.

30

Consume worlds as mouths Thy blazing  
Find I blinding rays those scorching.

31

Who art Thou, this Terrible Thing!  
For what avail, mission this Thine!!  
Gripped now am with urge to know.

32

Thus spoke the Lord:  
I'm the time that infolds all  
It's all over for most here  
Doomed are they, never mind war.

33

Since I've handed them sentence  
Thou art no more than hangman,  
Finish them all 'n flourish in turn  
Brings as reign thee power 'n pelf.

34

Take up arms 'n lap up crown  
For Drona, Bhishma and Karna,  
As well Jayadrath with the rest  
Truly are they doomed by Me.

35

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Stunned as he by what transpired  
Beseeched Pārtha, Lord Krishna.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Sing Thy praises the rejoiced world  
Hither 'n thither run wicked in awe  
Bow to Thee those self-realized.

37

Can one fail to worship Thee  
Creator's Creator, 'n Universal!

38

Thee the Primal, All-Dweller  
Thou All-Knower, One to know.

39

God of gods, O, our Father  
Thee I salute on and on.

40

One and All, who pervades all  
Thou All-Powerful, praise be Thee.

41

Ignorant being of Thy Great Being  
Owing to contempt familiarity bred  
Sadly I have been badly behaving.

42

As I took Thee for granted  
Kindly forgive, O, Great Soul.

43

Thou art Greater than greatest  
None Thee in three worlds equal.

44

Treat me kindly 'n forgive  
All I crave for, is Thy grace.

45

Form Thy Current holds dreadful  
Pray show Divine Grace of Thine.

46

With mace, discus 'n diadem  
Pray assume Thy Form four-armed.

47

Thus spoke the Lord:  
As thou please Me, so I've shown  
Form My Endless, none else seen.

48

Take to penance  
Or pore over four Vedas  
None that helps to see this Form.

49

Having beheld My bewildering Form  
Now ease with My Form Normal.

50

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
Having said thus Lord assumed  
His form normal that calmed Arjun.

51

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
O, Lord now I feel normal  
With Thy gentle form human.

52

Thus spoke the Lord:

Ever crave gods 'n angels too  
Just to behold that thee beheld.

53

Austerities well Vedic grasp  
Charity, as well ritual regimen  
Get none to what thou had seen.

54

Yet in devotion, divines man  
Attains besides, Form this Mine.

55

He that takes Me for Supreme  
And treats his work as Mine own one,  
Gets who rid of his restraints  
And keeps his faith in Me always,  
He who bears no ill-feeling  
Ever on move, he comes to Me.

*Ends thus:*

*Nature of Omnipresence,  
The Eleventh Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 12**

#### ***Doctrine of Faith***

This chapter of 20 slokas, known as *bhakti* yoga, Doctrine of Faith, enumerates the human qualities that are endearing to the Supreme Spirit. In this also are discussed the ways in which one still could win the Lord's favour yet failing to set store on Him.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Pray tell who's better realized,  
One that devoted as stated  
Or relies who on God Obscure.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Me in devotion who worships  
Him I reckon as well realized.

3

Having said that add I might  
Looks as one to God Obscure -

4

Doth he fine with senses reined  
If well disposed towards the world.

5

But it's tough ask nonetheless  
For one to realize God Obscure.

6

Whosoever hath faith in Me  
And leans on Me heart 'n soul -

7

Him I help to cross over  
Ocean vast of births 'n deaths.

8

If thou develop faith in Me  
Take for granted I take thee.

9

Were thee to fail develop faith  
It's not thou reached blind alley,  
Ever Me having in thy mind  
Practice lets thee turn the bend.

10

If thou feel that's hard as well  
Indulge then in deeds Me please.

11

If thou find that difficult too  
Give thyself to Me Supreme  
Act then with thy subdued mind  
With no thought for what follows.

12

Scores thought over mere rotting  
Betters meditation awareness too  
What helps man to find moorings  
Are acts his with no axe to grind.

13

Kind-hearted 'n considerate  
Friendly natured, forgiving too  
Lays no store on highs and lows  
Suffers no pride 'n possessive not -

14

Who's patient 'n cheerful  
Self-willed as well persevering,  
Who's hearty ever at work  
Makes he devout My beloved.

15

Troubles he none or perturbs  
It's such poised I'm proud of.

16

Who's simple, never in want  
Covets he not in vantage post  
Shakes him none, he keeps his nerve  
It's such who Me please the most.

17

He's My darling who craves not  
Yet won't shun the pleasures of life  
Takes but things all as they come.

18

Treats he equal friends 'n foes  
Scorn or honour minds he not  
Keeps he cool in grief and joy  
Nurses for none soft centre –

19

Pats 'n slights all in the score  
Treats as equal score My man  
Takes he in his stride his lot  
But won't put the blame on Me.

20

Who in dharma this engage  
Them I hold in special esteem.

*Ends thus:*

*Doctrine of Faith,*  
*The Twelfth Chapter*  
*Of Bhagavad-Gita,*  
*Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 13**

#### ***Field and Farmer***

This chapter of 35 *slokas*, known as *kshetra kshetragnya vibhāga yoga*, *Field and Farmer*, deals with body and spirit in the first half, and for the rest about *Prakruti* (Nature) and *Purusha* (Supreme Spirit). It may be noted that customarily the first verse that is carried here is either omitted altogether or retained unnumbered for reasons none explained.

Thereby to avoid confusion in comparison, the same is numbered 0 in this text. One might notice that s10, advocating asceticism to which Lord Krishna is opposed, doesn't jell with the rest, either contextually or philosophically, and thus should be seen as an interpolation.

S22, which states that the Supreme Soul, lay in beings as a sustainer, conserver, enjoyer and overseer, contravenes its very nature expostulated in s16-s18, ch.15. Besides, as can be seen, it affects the continuity between s21 and s23 of this chapter. S30, akin to s15 is an irrelevant interpolation too.

0

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
What is nature 'n its role,  
What is spirit 'n its nature,  
What is frame 'n who lords it  
What makes feeling 'n sixth sense?

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Sees who body his as field  
Sees he all there is to see.

2

Knows who Spirit One dwells in all  
Knows he all that's there to know.

3

Lend thy ear, as I reveal  
Nature of thy frame, as well  
Spirit that tenants as farmer  
Besides Him and His prowess.

4

In chants validate what Vedas  
Aspects that well Brahmanās delve  
Reasoned wise in varied ways.

5

Subject to reason, ego as well  
Steeped is frame in elements five,  
Earth, water, fire, ether and air  
Organs those ten, as well mind.

6

Desire, derision, pleasure 'n pain  
Pitch their tents in frames human.

7

Knowing is being -  
Amiable and humble, simple 'n honest  
Patient 'n decent, clean and clear  
Not to speak of fair and firm -

8

Void of desires, egotism devoid  
Passion none for life and times -

9

With no craving for possessions  
Fondness none for things of life  
None the averse, all the same.

11

Naive though fail to follow suit  
Tend all wise to probe nature  
And strive to see the Spirit in Me.

12

Let Me tell thee what's needed  
To let thee grasp the State Brahman  
Which if done would bring in bliss.

13

All-Reaching, He's All-Seeing  
All Hearing, He pervades all.

14

Organs in His likeness made  
Unlinked though to their senses,  
He that sustains all three worlds  
Unattached though to goings on.

15

In beings all 'n objects too  
Within He lies, without as well,  
If one comes to grasp this well  
It's perception that's Supreme.

16

It's how Brahman dwells in all  
Till He ends all what that keeps.

17

He's the Light that leaves no shade  
He's the One for one to know  
He's the Goal of all learning  
He's the Tenant in every heart.

18

It's the knowable of the frame  
Me who worship come to grasp.

19

Spirit 'n Nature, ageless both  
Nature of beings, of Nature born.

20

It's Nature that tends beings  
Binding Spirit to one's own acts.

21

Spirit that lay in beings all  
Inclines to one's attitudes,

With the ethos it imbibes  
Tends it one to like rebirth.

23

Gets one freed, as he grasps  
Aspects Nature 'n Spirit as well.

24

Indulge who in meditation  
Find they Supreme Spirit in them,  
Some as divine through wisdom  
Others do so by deeds selfless.

25

He who finds this all too hard  
May he obtain wise counsel  
And be rid of births and deaths.

26

Whatever exists in this world  
Designs Spirit in Nature's womb.

27

Sees he well, who would see  
What doth perish is just the frame  
End there none to Spirit therein.

28

Realize if thou Spirit in thee  
Same as one that dwells in all  
Hurt thou never thine own self  
Thereby attain Me Supreme.

29

Beings act per their nature  
Thus the Spirit that lay in them  
Hath no hand in deeds of theirs.

31

Having none its attributes  
Apart being from nature  
Spirit hath no qualms of its own.

32

As with ether, spread all over  
None the sullied, exposed being  
So is the case with Spirit in thee.

33

Sun as one lights all three worlds  
It's one Spirit that glows all frames.

Aware if thee of Spirit 'n frame  
Frees that thou from all bindings  
Making way to reach Supreme.

*Ends thus:*

*Field and Farmer,  
The Thirteenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 14**

#### ***Proclivities to Know***

This diagnostic chapter of 27 *slokas*, known as *gunatraya vibhāga yoga*, *Differentiation of Qualities Three*, details the three human proclivities - virtue, passion and delusion. It concludes with the identification of the realized spirit.

However, it may be noted that s3, s4 and s19 that deal with the Nature and the Spirit are digressions, and thus are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Pass I now thee that knowledge  
With which sages free themselves.

2

Knows whoso this reaches Me  
Keeps thus births 'n deaths at bay.

5

To tie the Spirit 'n body tight  
Uses Nature as its threads  
Virtue, passion as well delusion.

6

Spirit as well gets well enticed  
By the charms of life well-led  
Steeped in wisdom and virtue.

7

Frames of passion as it weds  
Spirit gets fond of joys of life.

8

It's in delusion Spirit with sloth  
Doth go in tow on wrong path.

9

Gives man virtue life of ease  
Grinds him passion in despair  
Deprives delusion him of reason.

10

Of the trio often  
Takes as lead role one of these  
Others to sidelines are confined.

11

Wearing wisdom on his sleeve  
Radiates virtuous throughout life.

12

Plain greedy, or ever restive  
It's the way all passionate live.

13

Dull in mind  
And perverted  
In work lethargic  
He's but deluded.

14

Peaks as virtue dies as one  
Ascends he the State Highest.

15

Dies if one with passion on hold  
Comes he back to resume things,  
Lives who deluded all his life  
Gets he none better in rebirths.

16

Virtuous sully never their lives  
Rue passionate as chase joys  
Go down deluded drain of life.

17

Gives as virtue wisdom true  
Renders passion unto grief  
Leads as delusion into sloth.

18

Echelons virtuous reach higher  
Remain 'as is where' passionate  
Go down ladder ever the deluded.

20

Out of orbit if thou go  
Of Nature that grips thy mind  
Freed be thou of recurring births.

21

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Can man ever, rein in matter,  
Is there regimen that reins it?

22

Thus spoke the Lord:  
With no let or ever hindrance  
Whatever it be he lets go,  
Takes he things all as they come  
With none fondness or distaste.

23

Seeing it all nature's work  
From the fringes of conscience  
Detached he watches goings on.

24

It's in fairness that he weighs  
Affairs of life in fine balance.

25

Sans self, ego, self-realized  
Works his way to state tranquil.

26

It's by capping his nature  
Wavers he not from the path  
That which truly leads to Me  
And in end he turns Brahman.

27

It's Me Immortal self of Brahman  
Dharma eternal that's All-Blissful.

*Ends thus:*

*Proclivities to Know,  
The Fourteenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 15**

#### ***Art of Liberation***

This unique chapter of 20 *slokas*, is known as *purushottama prāpti yoga*, *Realization of the Supreme*. S9, s12, s13, s14 and s15 being digressions are clearly interpolations.

Beginning with the parable of world as a fig tree, it later deals with the indwelling spirit and the Supreme Spirit, and the perishable man and the imperishable *Purusha* (Supreme Spirit).

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Wise see Nature as fig tree huge  
Roots its planted in high skies  
Branching down with Vedic leaves  
Helps which man reach State Supreme.

2

So to feed on their organs  
With its downward roots it ties  
Beings all to mundane things,  
With man being charged by wants  
Supplies he the feed it needs  
Through the knots of threefold ways.

3

Man as fails to lay his hands  
Roots on those that entwine him  
Helps dispassion sunder them.

4

Roots as sundered, one gets freed  
To reach the Vedic branch in reach,  
Grasps as he the truth there all  
Goes he up from branch to branch  
To end up on the root utmost  
On which Abode Supreme lies.

5

Freed of pride, desire 'n delusion  
Climbs as he, in self he dwells,  
Feels he same of pleasure 'n pain  
Detached he reaches thus Supreme.

6

Sun too doth pale nears it when  
Seat of moksha, Abode of Mine.

7

Spirit as lies in beings all  
Gets it rubbed with one's nature.

8

Wind as carries scent of flowers  
While leaving them as is where,  
In like fashion Spirit from frames  
Moves its awareness to rebirths.

10

Know not fools in lifetime theirs  
Nature of Spirit thus lies in them  
But ever on move from frame to frame.

11

This by striving wise realize  
Fail though naive in spite of it.

16

Perish all beings though in time  
Perishes not the Spirit in them.

17

Self Mine Highest that sustains  
Is but different from that One.

18

Since I transcend that perishes  
Apart 'n above the eternal One  
Vedas vouch Me Soul Supreme.

19

Who aver Me as Soul Supreme  
In My worship bring they faith.

20

Grasps who nuances of this science  
Turns he wise 'n accomplished thus.

*Ends thus:*

*Art of Liberation,  
The Fifteenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

### **Chapter 16**

#### ***Frailty of Thought***

This chapter of 24 slokas, known as *daivāsura sampad vibhāga yoga*, *The Characteristics of Virtuous and the Vile*, deals with all aspects of virtue and evil including how they affect human life.

S19 which implies that the Supreme Spirit condemns to hell those who hate Him is an obvious interpolation that contravenes Lord's affirmative statement in s29 ch.9, 'None I favour; slight I none / But devout Mine all gain Me true' and other such averred in many a context in this text.

Be that as it may, when He is the indweller in all beings as postulated by the Lord himself, won't the interpolative proposition of s19 amount to self-condemnation!

1

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Pure in heart 'n courage to boot  
Even mind with helping hand  
Works who hard 'n tries to grasp  
Austere, upright, and well-read –

2

Even tempered, loves he peace  
Liberal minded with kind heart  
Calm 'n truthful, well mannered  
Fickle he not or calumnious  
Modest natured covets he not –

3

Free of bias he's fair-minded  
Strong in will, he stalls envy  
Humble, and he forgives too  
He's virtuous thus earmarked.

4

Make all vile, rude guys all  
Vainglorious 'n haughty too,  
Besides being indignant  
No less are they indulgent.

5

Gives as virtue man freedom  
Keeps him vileness ever constrained.

6

World is as of good 'n bad  
Serves thee to know latter too.

7

Conduct of theirs lacks virtue  
Bear they demeanour that's impure.

8

Branding beings sexual products  
Reckon not such in God 'n truth.

9

These small minds, of ruined souls  
Wreck they world with acts of wrath.

10

Pride 'n lust, long wish list  
Vile in conceit live impure.

11

Seeing life as one to gloat  
Vile by impulse go to lengths.

12

Seek vile creatures ever shortcuts  
On way to wants, they ill-get wealth.

13

Think all vile, in like terms -  
This is mine so let me keep  
Why not have I more of it.

14

Foe this mine I've truly floored  
Won't I tackle the rest of them  
Sure I'm Lord of mine own world.

15

Note all vile, gloat as such -  
Besides wealthy, I'm well-born  
Won't I give and enjoy too.

16

To their hurt in illusion vile  
End up slaves of joys of flesh.

17

In vainglory live all vile  
And for show-off spend they well.

18

Blinded by pride, lustful lot  
Me they ill-treat lay in them.

20

Live all deluded far from Me  
Depraved ladder they go down.

21

Detours, lust, wrath 'n greed  
Self-destruct to go hell-ward.

22

Steer if clear, perils these men  
See they then the path perfect.

23

In their impulse vile impinge  
Upon the scriptures that hold good  
And thus keep ever from Supreme.

24

Ordain scriptures rights 'n wrongs  
It's now left to choose thy course.

*Ends thus:*

*Frailty of Thought,  
The Sixteenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita, Treatise of self-help.*

## ***Chapter 17***

### ***Science of Devotion***

This chapter of 28 *slokas*, known as *sraddhā trayā vibhāga yoga*, *Threefold Devotion*, deals with the spiritual and temporal aptitudes of man. S11-s13 that deal with the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded in ritualistic sense and s 23 -28 concerning *Om*, *Tat*, *Sat* and *Asat* of the Vedic hymns are clear interpolations for reasons the reader is familiar with.

However, s7 –

s10 that deal with the food habits of the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded would pose a problem in determining whether or not they are interpolations. Can eating habits be linked to the innate nature of man in an infallible manner? Perhaps, some future research and analysis might resolve the universality or otherwise of this averment, and till then, it is appropriate to reserve the judgment on these.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
None the regard for scriptures  
Who tend to manage life their well  
What Thou say of such of beings  
Virtuous, passionate or merely deluded.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:  
It's one's nature that tends him  
To be virtuous, passionate, or deluded.

3

Beings all have faith in some  
It's one's nature that shapes it.

4

Virtuous seek gods in worship  
Opt passionate to humour ghosts  
Turn all deluded towards the Hades.

5

Hoping for there all to gain  
Indulge vain in austerities  
Though not endorsed by scriptures.

6

It's in delusion they all fast  
Emaciating frames of theirs,  
Thus in foolishness they all  
Famish Mine own Self in them.

7

As with habits so with palates  
Come to tend all in three ways.

8

Opt virtuous all recipes fine  
Sustain health 'n enhance strength.

9

Hot 'n spicy, and pungent,  
Prefer food passionate that ill-suits.

10

Food of deluded is all stale  
Long in storage, and impure.

15

Rings with truth 'n laced with warmth  
It's speech austere that's well-meaning.

16

Simple 'n stoic  
Kind and candid  
It's mind austere  
With self-control.

17

Wanting none  
Never in turn,  
Done in concern  
Deed it's austere.

18

It's in pretension passionate live  
Eye they have on name 'n fame.

19

With troubled mind all deluded live  
Hurt themselves 'n others as well.

20

Virtuous deed is that extends  
Helping hand to one in need  
Guided by the zeal to serve.

21

Deed passionate is quid pro quo  
Ever done with some end in mind.

22

Aiding dubious with disdain  
It's deed deluded that lacks goal.

*Ends thus:*

*Science of Devotion,  
The Seventeenth Chapter  
Of Bhagavad-Gita,  
Treatise of self-help.*

## ***Chapter 18***

### ***Thy Looking-glass***

This chapter of 78 *slokas*, known as *moksha sanyāsa yoga*, *Realization through Abnegation*, describes such aspects of human behaviour based on the three natures - virtue, passion, and delusion - and the path of selfless action. And in the end, the relevance of, and the reverence to, the Gita is described. One can note that s12 breaks the continuity between s11 and s13 with hyperbolic averments, and s56 combines what is stated in the preceding and the succeeding *slokas*, and thus both are seemingly interpolations.

S41- s48 that describe the allotted duties of man on the basis of his caste are clearly interpolations. In essence, the discourse till s 40 is about the human nature and how it affects man. As can be seen, the duties on caste lines detailed in the said interpolations have no continuity of argument. As in earlier chapters, the text acquires continuity if only these verses are bypassed.

S61 avers that the Supreme dwells in humans and deludes them all by his *maya*. This is contrary to what is stated in s14, ch.5, '*It's his nature, but not Spirit / Makes man act by wants induced*'.

Thus, s61 clearly is an interpolation as it contravenes the neutrality of the Supreme Spirit in the affairs of man affirmed throughout by Lord Krishna.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Pray Thee tell, for my grasp  
All about sanyās, path forsake  
And self-denial that's *tyāga*.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:  
Lack inclination, it's sanyās  
Sans wants work what makes *tyāga*.

3

Fault some sages effort per se  
Others give nod to deeds noble.

4

Make thee privy of three ways  
By which, men all give up well.

5

Effort, gift 'n austerity  
Take men all on road forsake.

6

Forsake I this vouchsafe when  
Acts man with no axe to grind.

7

Avoid obligation, it's no abnegation  
Boils it down to, give up of delusion.

8

Forgo made easy passionate opt  
Desist from duties that strain them.

9

Indulge virtuous in their work  
With no thought of its outcome.

10

With no illusion but diligence  
Carries renunciant his duties  
Agreeable or otherwise too.

11

Needs one work to sustain life  
Relinquents avoid, overloads all.

13

Factors five all deeds engulf  
Know them well to free thyself.

14

Prone are acts to these aspects -  
Body to sustain, ego that goads  
Senses thy lure, life to guard  
Faith in deities that tends thee.

15

Be well or so be ill  
In word, thought 'n deed as well  
Sourced are acts in these aspects.

16

Ignoramus in vain ascribe  
Acts of theirs to Spirit in them.

17

It's for thee to realize now  
That by killing these Kauravs  
Slay thee none of them thyself.

18

Aspects knowable, known 'n knower  
Lead to duty, deed 'n doer, in that order.

19

Knowable as well deeds 'n doers  
Bracket those freed in three groups.

20

Lay indivisible in frames divisible  
Realize virtuous Spirit not perishable.

21

Spirit in them 'n others that lies  
Apart 'n unique feel passionate.

22

Failing to see beyond the self  
Deluded think like frog in well.

23

Illusions of life virtuous  
See in light of limitations  
Thus thou carry businesslike  
Duties that their life ordains.

24

In want passionate come to live  
Bogged down by, what they eye.

25

Deluded work in reckless ways  
Harm their cause 'n others' as well.

26

Taking well and ever at ease  
Senses honed 'n ego evened  
Detached virtuous ever engage.

27

Mind as covetous 'n thought impure  
Crave passionate all things mundane  
Which them excite as well pull down.

28

Verily deluded, vulgar 'n vacillate  
Arrogant, dishonest, ignorant 'n malicious  
Indolent being remain they gloomy.

29

By natures of these beings  
Features intellect theirs vary.

30

Deal virtuous in measures equal  
Weigh they fine all deeds their fair.

31

Perspective lack passionate right  
In weird ways they tend their lives.

32

Given their state of perversion  
Go all deluded in wrong path.

33

Virtuous ever in self-control  
Steady they wavering mind of theirs.

34

Things that seem to bring joys  
Passionate all with zeal pursue.

35

Proud 'n arrogant, doubting 'n grieving  
Bog down deluded in despair.

36

Make a note of these three ways  
Pains which banish 'n fetch bliss.

37

What fail sprint 'n serve long run  
Virtuous know keep woes at bay.

38

It's the way with thy passion  
To jump at all that what might tempt  
Which would turn sour in due course.

39

Ever in day-dreams  
End up deluded in dreamlands.

40

Beyond the pale of these natures  
None ever exists in three worlds.

49

With no want  
Allegiant to none,  
Freed from action  
Thou forsake.

50

Leads how forsake to Brahman  
Know that Wisdom Supreme now.

51

With pure mind 'n will that's strong  
Wants thou void and firm thy self –

52

Frugal of food, thoughts reined in  
Dwell in self thou sans passion –

53

Lack thou pride, wish 'n wrath  
Give up ego, crave not power  
Be content and live in peace  
It's then thou come near Brahman.

54

Treat all beings ever equal  
And in devotion live tranquil.  
It's thou attain State Brahman.

55

It's then one would know Me true  
That tends him to be one with Me.

57

Let thy faith in Me be strong  
Take Me thou for thy shelter  
And ever thee act as My agent.

58

It's all smooth sail if heeded  
At thy peril thou this ignore.

59

It's thine ego sues for peace  
But prevails what is thy nature.

60

Sidetrack might thine illusions  
But nature thine would shape thy deeds.

62

Fix thy mind on Me Supreme  
Find thou peace in My refuge.

63

That thee heard of this wisdom  
For task on hand now apply mind.

64

O, dear friend, let Me tell  
Word My final that benefits.

65

If one remains to Me firm  
It's My promise I take him.

66

Set all aside 'n have faith  
Thus sans sin, reach Me thou.

67

None of this for those who lack  
Faith in Me and selfless work.

68

Whoso passes this secret  
To devout Mine all reach Me true.

69

Know not I a dearer soul  
None there ever a better service.

70

Who that studies this discourse  
He Me prays in true wisdom.

71

Hears this whoso in good faith  
Attains he the Worlds Higher.

72

Looks as if thou got it right  
Let not delusions rule thy head.

73

Thus spoke Arjuna:  
Glad O Lord  
Gone are doubts,  
Sense I gained  
With Thy words.

74

Thus spoke Sanjaya:  
It's what I've heard of that stirring  
Dialogue between these great souls  
Krishn and Arjun as they spoke.

75

It's with Vyasa's grace I've heard  
This peerless art of yogic life  
Which Lord Krishna taught Pārtha.

76

Found I thrilling, dialogue stirring  
Reminiscing I rejoice, again and again.

77

What a wondrous Form that was  
Recalling I rejoice, again and again.

Wherever yogic Lord Krishna  
Joins hands with great Paartha  
Goddess Victory, spreads carpet  
Heaven on earth to set there ever.

*Ends thus:*

*Thy Looking-glass  
The Eighteenth Chapter  
Of Vyāsā's classic  
Bhagavad-Gita.*